

Application No.: 10/664,698
Amdt dated: June 29, 2007
Reply to Office action of March 30, 2007

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-35 (Canceled).

36. (Currently amended) A surgical instrument adapted to contact tissue of a patient to provide traction with the tissue, the surgical instrument comprising:

opposable first and second pads formed of a soft resilient material;

a multiplicity of first projections formed of the same soft resilient material as the first pad and disposed to extend outwardly of the first pad and to provide a first tissue contacting surface; and

a multiplicity of second projections formed of the same soft resilient material as the second pad and disposed to extend outwardly of the second pad and to provide a second tissue contacting surface,

wherein the first and second projections interrelate to facilitate traction when the pads are moved toward one another.

37. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 36, wherein each of the first and second pads has a particular surface adapted to face the tissue of the patient and has first traction characteristics.

38. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 37, wherein each of the first and second tissue contacting surfaces has traction characteristics different from the first traction characteristics.

39. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 36, wherein the first and second projections are arranged in a pattern.

40. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 39, wherein the pattern is a waffle pattern.

41. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 39, wherein the pattern is a saw-tooth pattern.

42. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 37, wherein each of the first and second projections has an axis and a radial cross-section of one of a polygonal and an irregular configuration.

43. (Previously presented)The surgical instrument of Claim 42, wherein the axis of at least one of the projections is disposed at an angle to the particular surface of at least one of the first and second pads.

44. (Previously presented)The surgical instrument of Claim 36, further comprising opposable first and second jaws to fixedly support the first and second pads, respectively.

45. (Previously presented)The surgical instrument of Claim 39, wherein the pattern of the projections provides traction with the tissue of a first magnitude in a first direction and provides traction with the tissue of a second magnitude in a second direction; and the first magnitude being different from the second magnitude and the first direction being different from the second direction.

46. (Previously presented)The surgical instrument of Claim 37, wherein:
at least one of the first projections and one of the second projections has an axis extending between a first end and a second end, the first end being disposed in proximity to the particular surface of the first pad and the second pad, respectively, with the second end extending outwardly of the first pad and the second pad, respectively; and

the projection having a radial cross-section that progressively decreases in area from the first end to the second end.

47. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 42, wherein the radial cross-section of each of the first and second projections is oval.

48. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 36, wherein the opposable first and second pads formed of a soft resilient material further comprises a hydrophilic material, the multiplicity of first projections comprises the same hydrophilic material as the first pad and the multiplicity of second projections comprises the same hydrophilic material as the second pad.

49. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 36, wherein:
the opposable first and second pads have a distal end, a proximal end and a surface facing the tissue of the patient and extending between the proximal end and the distal end,

the multiplicity of first projections extending at an angle away from the proximal end of the first pad and away from the surface of the first pad and towards the distal end of the first pad and towards the surface of the second pad; and

the multiplicity of second projections extending at an angle away from the proximal end of the second pad and away from the surface of the second pad and towards the distal end of the second pad and towards the surface of the first pad.

50. (New) The surgical instrument of claim 49 wherein the multiplicity of first projections comprises at least three rows and three columns of projections, each projection identically angled and orientated on the first pad.

51. (New) A surgical instrument adapted to contact tissue of a patient to provide traction with the tissue, the surgical instrument comprising:

a first jaw having a first surface formed of a hard plastic material;

a first soft compliant material pad covering the first surface of the first jaw and having a first tissue contacting surface;

a second jaw connected to the first jaw and biased towards a proximal relationship with the first jaw, the second jaw having a second surface formed of a hard plastic material and facing towards the first surface;

a second soft compliant material pad covering the second surface of the second jaw and having a second tissue contacting surface facing towards the first tissue contacting surface;

a plurality of first projections integrated with the first soft compliant material pad and angling away from the first tissue contacting surface of the first soft compliant material pad; and

a plurality of second projections integrated with the second soft compliant material pad and angling away from the second tissue contacting surface of the second soft compliant material pad.

52. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 51, wherein the first soft compliant material pad further comprises a hydrophilic material and the second soft compliant material pad further comprises a hydrophilic material.

53. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 51, wherein:
the first soft compliant material pad having a distal end and a proximal end adjacent to a connection between the first and second jaws; and

the plurality of first projections further comprises at least three rows and three columns of projections, each projection angled away from the first tissue contacting surface of the first soft compliant material pad and away from the proximal end of the first soft compliant material pad and towards the second tissue contacting surface of the second soft compliant material pad and towards the distal end of the first soft compliant material pad.

54. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 53, wherein:

each of the plurality of first projections has an axis extending between a first end and a second end, the first end being disposed in proximity to the first tissue contacting surface of the first soft compliant pad; and

each of the plurality of first projections has a radial cross-section that progressively decreases in area from the first end to the second end.

55. (New) The surgical instrument of Claim 54, wherein the radial cross-section throughout an entire length of each of the plurality of first projections is oval.